

G402 PERFORMANCE CONTEXTS 1: EXEMPLAR WORK FOR CANDIDATE A

G402 Question: ‘How does Bourne structure his work in order to achieve the most theatrically effective performance?’ (June 2010)

2. Matthew Bourne uses a vast range of techniques throughout his performances. Bourne’s work is often described as creative and innovative. In order to achieve the most theatrically effective performance he has to use several different approaches when devising his piece, ^{as well as carefully considering its structure}. In works such as Swan Lake this is very important and helps create an extreamly successful piece.

One of Bourne’s main focuses when forming a piece is characterisation. Bourne borrows elements of history and general society in order to give his characters greater meaning and depth. As well as this doing so can often cause questioning and reflection amongst the audience. For example in Swan Lake the Prince’s character is shaped by using traits from previous monarchy as well as incorporating some characteristics many people in society possess. Bourne uses this character and manipulates a previous king’s drinking problem, as well as another king’s obsession with swans. In doing so he forces the audience to come to terms with the issues they would normally endeavour to ignore.

In addition to this Matthew Bourne adapts his style choices in dance so that he can for a new inovative art form, that gives his work a different outlook than that of any other. This is evident in Swan Lake as Bourne fuses together Ballet and Contemporary dance, in order to develop the nature of the swans. In the original Swan Lake the swans movements are generally smooth, soft and gentle movements, whereas in Bourne’s version due to his development of dance style as well as his carefully thought of characterisation the swans become more agressive, with sharp angular movements. This element of Swan Lake helps to highlight the Prince’s slight insanity as well as illustrate him gradually losing control of the situation he is facing. In doing so Bourne is evidently able to create a theatrically effective piece.

Another technique Bourne uses in order to further develop the effectiveness of his piece is the use of props. Although the props he uses are often very minimal they alway make a great impact on the narrative and what he is aiming to portray. For example in Swan Lake the first time the Prince becomes surrounded by the swans whilst in his bed, he is larger than them and his bed is a regular size showing that he still has some controll over them. However later on in the piece Matthew Bourne reworks this scene. The bed becomes larger highlighting the Prince’s isolation and making him more vulnerable, the swans also then seem larger than him showing that he has now lost all controll over the situation.

As well as this when forming a piece Bourne takes his choice of cast into great consideration. For example in Swan

Is this an intro to this Q?

*2nd part of the question, but Structure?
Q as an afterthought?*

Sp?

K, but this needs to be argued in the context of the Q- otherwise the Q is ignored. Punctuation?

*Sp
Eg*

*Sp
Unclear
Point?*

Evidence? & Relevance to Q?

*Style but Structure?
Expression?Sp? Gm?*

K

General- what does “smooth, soft and gentle” mean?

Eg?

Evidence?

General conclusion drawn from little evidence.

K of props but answering a different question?

*Sp?
General.*

Eg.

Sp?

*Sp?
Cast but structure?*

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<p>Lake Bourne chose to use a mainly male cast. By making the main characters (Swans, Prince) both male he is able to form a completely new and challenging piece. Having males as swans <u>leads to the want for them to come across as more aggressive</u> and powerful. As well as this <u>he challenges one of society's many debates</u> by having the Prince fall in love with a male swan. The piece becomes very effective as it causes the audience to question it and focus greatly on the narrative.</p> <p>Therefore it is through Bourne's exploration of characters as well as his development of dance and use of props that enables him to achieve a theatrically effective performance. As by focusing on these aspects of the piece he gives the audience a lot to take in as well as keep them interested, and it is almost <u>gauranteed</u> that when the performance is finished the audience will discuss or think about the issues displayed within the narrative. It also makes it memorable for the <u>audience which</u> is vital for a piece to be effective and successful.</p>	<p><i>Expression? Gm?</i></p> <p><i>Archaic expression?</i> <i>Sp?</i> <i>Expression?</i></p> <p><i>General</i></p> <p><i>Sp?</i></p> <p><i>Issues? Relevance to Q?</i> <i>Restates the same comment</i> <i>Punctuation?</i></p>
<p>Marks: K&U-13+QoL-3 = 16 644 words- less than is expected for an answer in this paper. Avoids the question, but some reference to theatricality. Some evidence of K of Swan Lake, but key element of the question, viz. "structure", ignored apart from an afterthought in intro. Some very general, rather than analytical, comments with little art form – dance – detail. Spelling, Grammar errors and weak expression.</p>	
<p>G402 Question: 'To what extent does the structure of George Gershwin's songs reflect the changing emotions of the lyrics?' (June 2010)</p>	
<p>George Gershwin; The man I love, Summertime, I got rhythm, Lets call the whole thing off, Blah Blah Blah, The lady is a tramp.</p> <p>18. George Gershwin was a very successful composer who began to play the piano at 12 yrs old and by age 15 he worked in Tin Pan Alley and soon after that began composing his own songs. Gershwin's songs are known <u>greatly</u> for reflecting the changing emotions of the lyrics. There are several aspects he considers in order to ensure his songs are successful in doing so.</p> <p>One way in which he does this is that the majority of the time the lyrics are written first so therefore the mood of the lyrics and <u>stylistic influences</u> in the way the lyric were written are then used in order to shape the <u>aconaniment</u>. For example the song "Lets call the whole thing off" was influenced by ragtime so <u>the accompaniment follows that structure</u>. As well as the <u>the accompaniment</u> follows the pattern of the lyrics using a simple harmony. So for example in the B section of this song when <u>the melody changes</u> the accompaniment changes to suit this part and at times is used to help to put greater emphasis on some lyrics. As although the song is comical it contains an underlying seriousness and so when the serious parts of the lyrics occur the music is used to highlight them. For example "that might break my heart" is <u>sung in a broken way and so the</u></p>	<p><i>(Another question about the way works are structured)</i></p> <p><i>Relevance of this biog?</i></p> <p><i>Expression?</i></p> <p><i>Again, first part of question ignored.</i></p> <p><i>K but how does this have an impact on the structure?</i> <i>Meaning?</i> <i>Sp?</i></p> <p><i>Eg</i> <i>Explain.</i> <i>Explain</i> <i>Eg? of 'simple harmony'</i> <i>From what to what?</i> <i>Explain</i> <i>Evidence?</i> <i>K</i></p> <p><i>Eg</i> <i>Meaning? Clarify.</i></p>

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<p><u>music does the same.</u></p> <p>Another good example of how Gershwin <u>structures</u> his songs to reflect the changing emotions of the lyrics is within the song “Summertime”. “Summertime” was written for the musical “Porgy and Bess” as a lullaby. Therefore the structure of the song is adapted for its purpose. This song contains no chorus instead <u>the song is shaped depending on the subject of each section</u>. Gershwin also structured this song based on the cultural background of the characters. Being Black American characters he chose to base “Summertime” on Blues which is evident by his use of blues notes. The lyrics are, however, greatly <u>influential</u> throughout this song as Gershwin uses word painting to emphasise particular phrases of the song. For example, <u>the accompaniment changes</u> during the part where the lyrics say “ the fish are jumping” in order to place emphasis on the change of style in this section.</p> <p>As well as this “ The man I love” was formed using a simple <u>Harmony</u> as Gershwin wanted to allow the listener to focus more on the lyrics of the song and the seriousness of the relationship described within the song. The emotion within these lyrics are <u>extremely</u> important and so the accompaniment is simple and used to compliment and highlight the lyrics. It also follows the AABA structure which makes the song easy to listen to and understand as it is not constantly changing <u>causing the tune to become familiar to the ears of the audience</u>. As well as this the greater the emotion the higher that phrase is played, therefore where most ^ the emotion comes out through the lyrics the accompaniment is played in its highest range in order to depict this.</p> <p>It is for these reasons among many others why Gershwin is able to use the structure of his songs to reflect the emotions of the lyrics. By writing the lyrics first he is able to pull out the emotions of the words and <u>insure</u> they are installed within the music. Also by focusing on the style in which the song is written he is able to shape the music accordingly using the appropriate notes in order to further illustrate the emotion intended in the lyric.</p>	<p><i>Sp?</i></p> <p><i>K</i></p> <p><i>K but then very general.</i></p> <p><i>K</i></p> <p><i>K</i></p> <p><i>Eg?</i></p> <p><i>Sp?</i></p> <p><i>K</i></p> <p><i>Eg but not explained sufficiently musically to evidence the example. How does the accompaniment change?</i></p> <p><i>Caps? Explain simple harmony.</i></p> <p><i>Very general</i></p> <p><i>Sp?</i></p> <p><i>Structure K. Q.</i></p> <p><i>general</i></p> <p><i>Expression?</i></p> <p><i>Eg?</i></p> <p><i>Evidence?</i></p> <p><i>Sp?</i></p> <p><i>General</i></p>
<p>Marks: K&U 13 + QoL 3 = 16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>784 words- closer to what is expected for an answer on this paper.</i> • <i>A fraction more attempt to address the question through reference to structure towards the end, but no connection made between structure and changing emotions etc.</i> • <i>Some evidence of K of works but unconvincing of anything more than a superficial understanding and again lacks art form detail, discussing very generally.</i> • <i>Weak expression with Spelling and Grammar errors.</i> 	<p>Paper Total = 32/60 (equivalent to a Grade E in June 2010)</p>